

Tips, Tricks, News & Notes



October 2009

News to Help you Save Time & Money

Do You Have an Escape Plan?

October is Fire Prevention Month and a good time to ask the question, “Do you have an escape plan?” That is, a plan to get out of your home safely if a fire breaks out?

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), only about one in four of us has taken the time to draw a home escape plan and practice it. That means a lot of us are in danger of doing the wrong thing, with possible tragic results.

In addition to not being prepared, many of us are also misinformed! For example, in a recent survey the NFPA learned that one-third of us think we’d have at least six minutes before a home fire became life-threatening, but the available time is often much less. And only eight percent said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to – get out!

Speaking of smoke alarms, the survey also found that in one out of every five homes equipped with at least one smoke alarm, not a single one was working. Do you recall when you last tested or changed your smoke alarm batteries?

And while many of us think of our kitchens as the “heart” of our homes, *cooking* is the leading cause of home fires and injuries, and *unattended cooking* is the leading cause of cooking fires.

Inside This Issue

- Write It & Save It
- New Approach to Problems
- I Heard you Say
- Your Toothbrush
- Your New Career?
- From My Nightstand
- Halloween Riddles

The NFPA and I want this month – and every month – to be a safe one for you and those you love, so please visit www.nfpa.org for a wealth of safety information, fire prevention tips, and resources

All My Best,

Ryan

Your Friend in the Real Estate Business

Client Corner

Congratulations to the following friends and clients for your recent sale/purchases. Thank you for putting your trust in me to help you through the process. I truly appreciate you.

**Patrick Brezik &
Kayo Kawamoto**

Coleen Wright

Scott Dunn

Who's the next person you know who could use my help? I'd much prefer to spend my time assisting those that you care about most. *I sincerely thank you for your referrals!*

Escape From The “Always More” Mindset

You may know someone who skitters from one task to another, never enjoying an accomplishment before moving on to the next thing to be accomplished or mastered. And what does get done is never enough.

In *The Heroine's Journey* by Maureen Murdock, this is called “The myth of never being enough.” When you're stuck in this mindset, you're never satisfied with what you do, because something deep inside yourself tells you, “It's not enough.” You're always thinking ahead. You agree that what you're engaged in currently is not enough. If you're gardening, you feel you should be working on your report, and if you're working on your report, you feel you should be gardening.

Murdock recommends this exercise for overcoming this tyrannical way of thinking. Take a piece of paper and divide it into three columns. In the first column write, “I planted daisies.” In the second column write, “I am satisfied.” In the third column write, “And that's enough!”

Though it's a simple exercise, Murdock says that if you practice it whenever you catch yourself being a self-critical, unsatisfied tyrant, that feeling of “not enough” will gradually disappear from your mind.

Write It/\$ave It

Are you spending more money than you need to? It's a nagging worry, especially these days. Fortunately, you don't need an advanced degree in finance and accounting to analyze your spending.

Try this: Keep track of your spending for one week. Just one week – longer, and you'll probably get too busy. But you can hold onto your receipts and add them up for seven days. At the end of the week, separate and categorize your expenses (use a spreadsheet if that helps you visualize better). You'll see what you're spending your money on, and chances are you'll find at least a few areas where you can cut back.



New Approach To Problems

At work, at home, even on vacation, there are always problems that need solving. Some problems are easy to solve with the same solutions that have always worked. Others call for a fresh thinking, an original approach. Try these tips for generating exciting, new ideas:

Rephrase your problem. Turn your problem around by describing it in different words. Instead of “How can we produce more widgets?” ask, “What’s preventing us from producing X widgets a week?”

Dig deeper. Instead of focusing exclusively on the present situation, explore the background. When did the problem start, for example? What changed? Or, what are some of the underlying causes? What could you do about them?

Avoid either/or thinking. Don’t limit the possibilities. Instead of “We can either raise revenues or cut costs,” look for ways to do both, or find additional options. entrenched in their habits. But by breaking away from routine and switching over to electronic statements, each year the average American household would Maybe you have time to work on only one project, for example, but instead of neglecting the other, perhaps you can find someone else to get it started.

Ask for help. No matter how smart you are, an extra brain will usually help you find options you wouldn’t have considered on your own. Someone else’s eyes may see angles you hadn’t spotted before. Go outside your usual circle of advisors for a different perspective.

Keep a log. Carry a small notebook and get into the habit of writing down your ideas as they occur to you, so they’ll be accessible when you need them. Don’t worry about how practical your ideas are in the beginning, or what they might apply to. Just looking through your list may spark a thought you wouldn’t have found before.

Did You Know?

There are at least nine locations in the United States that claim to be haunted by the ghost of John Wilkes Booth.

The human eye reaches its full size by one year of age

Soft drink Dr Pepper’s namesake, Charles T. Pepper, wasn’t a “real” doctor; he had a Ph.D. in literature from the University of Virginia.

The adhesion of Post-it brand sticky notes has increased 55 percent since 1990

The world record for time spend standing on one’s head is 12 days 4 hours and 31 minutes.

The U.S. population spends more than \$10 billion on temporary tattoos

If you enjoy reading my newsletter each month

Let me introduce you to my Real Estate Blog - www.AustinPropertyTalk.com. The Blog provides further insight into the Austin Real Estate Market as well as the types of articles that you have come to expect in my monthly newsletters.

This Month's Quiz Question

How many phalanges are in the human hand?

Everyone who emails or calls in the correct answer over the next month will be entered into a drawing for:

\$20 gift card to

HEB

ryan@stonehavenrealty.com

512.773.3493

"I Heard You Say..."

Take a tip from your favorite waiter or waitress: According to a study, 85 percent of customers like their order repeated back to them, because it makes them feel they're being heard. It also gives you the chance to make changes or corrections, but the most important effect is that it validates what you've said.

Use this as a guide to everyday conversations. Don't parrot back people's words all the time, of course, but paraphrase them often enough to show that you value what they're saying.

Your Toothbrush – Friend Or Foe?

You may be very conscientious about your dental care, but if you're using a worn toothbrush, you may also be sabotaging your good efforts.

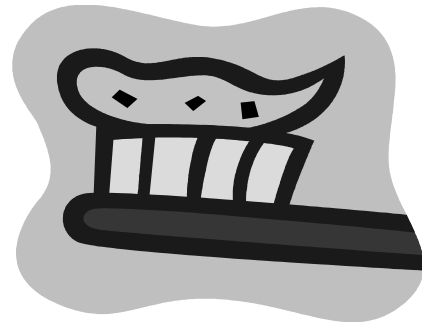
The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends replacing your toothbrush every three to four months, or sooner if the bristles are frayed. Children's toothbrushes often need replacing more frequently than adult brushes. In addition:

Do not share toothbrushes. Sharing a toothbrush could result in an exchange of body fluids and/or microorganisms between the users of the toothbrush, placing the individuals involved at an increased risk for infections. This practice could be a particular concern for persons with compromised immune systems or existing infectious diseases.

Thoroughly rinse toothbrushes with tap water after brushing to remove any remaining toothpaste and debris. Store the brush in an upright position and allow the toothbrush to air-dry until used again.

If more than one brush is stored in the same holder or area, keep the brushes separated to prevent cross-contamination. Clean the holder often.

Do not routinely cover toothbrushes or store them in closed containers. A moist environment such as a closed container is more conducive to bacterial growth than the open air.



Your New Career?

Lots of people these days are investigating new careers, thanks to the recession and the changing economic landscape.

Yahoo's HotJobs Web site targets some jobs that just might become major options for today's and tomorrow's jobseekers:

Data miner. Collectors of data from the Internet for marketing purposes may become very important as more and more commerce moves online. The mean annual salary is just over \$70,000; the top 10 percent can earn over \$100,000.

Environmental engineer. Climate change, fluctuating energy prices, and ecological concerns are driving a new need for people who can create clean, low-impact vehicles, buildings, and products. Salary: approximately \$74,000.

Accent reduction. Globalization means being able to communicate clearly with people from other cultures. Trainers work with executives, customer-relations specialists, and others around the world to eliminate speaking styles that impede clarity of communication. Salary: about \$64,000.

Auto mechanic. Drivers are keeping their current vehicles longer instead of spending money on new cars, which means an increased need for maintenance. And a generation of Baby Boomer mechanics is reaching retirement age. Average salary: A little over \$36,000.

Sept. Quiz Answer

The terms *ruck*, *lineout*, and *maul* pertain to what sport?

Answer: Rugby.

Source: www.guide.rugby.com

Congratulations to Jo Anderson. Your name was selected at random from all of the correct quiz entries and you'll receive:

A Gift Card to Rudys BBQ

Know Someone Who is trying to Sell on their Own?

Trying to Sell or Rent a home 'By Owner' can be a challenging experience - even more so given today's market conditions. If you know someone who is struggling to sell a home on their own, be a friend and recommend they take some time to briefly sit down with me and discuss their options. Together we will be able to find a scenario and approach that will help them achieve their goals of selling and moving on. If nothing else, they will be much more knowledgeable about what it takes to sell a house in this market.

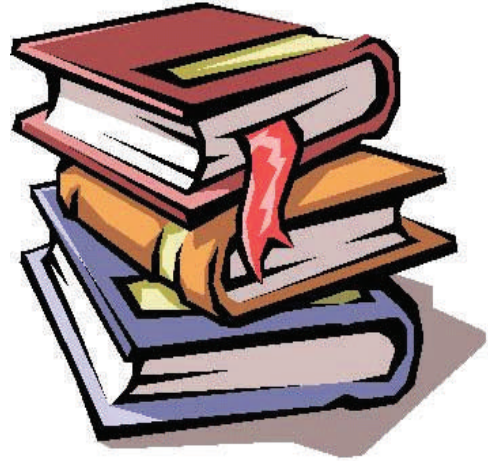
Quotes

Humor is the shortest distance between two people.
– Victor Borge

The harder I work, the luckier I get.
– Samuel Goldwyn

Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you'd have preferred to talk.
– Doug Larson

From My Nightstand



I didn't include one of these columns in my last newsletter and some of you noticed. Good! I guess that means you are actually reading to page 6. The truth is that when I decided this summer to produce a newsletter every month as opposed to every other month (did you notice?), it meant that I had to read at least a book a month to have something to write here.

I actually did pick up a James Patterson novel for our flight home from San Francisco and I read that one very quickly. His books are always a quick read because he writes with a lot of really short chapters. But, that particular book wasn't really news worthy. It wasn't one of his best in my opinion.

The other book that I've been casually reading is *The Answer* by John Assaraf and Murray Smith. Its pretty heavy text - not the kind of book you speed through. I plan to share my thoughts on the book at a later date but I'm not even half way through yet.

Ah, but fear not! On a recent short trip to the beach with family, I brought along a book that I've been looking forward to reading. I was able to finish reading it in a little over a days time. The book is called *The Go-Giver* by Bob Burg and John David Mann. As with most of the books that I read, it is a business philosophy book, but its principles can very easily be applied to the daily life of anyone who reads it.

The book is written in the context of a story or parable. In fact the subtitle is: A little story about a Powerful Business Idea. The story follows an ambitious young sales man, Joe, who is a real "go-getter," yet struggling to meet his quarterly quotas. He can't seem to get out of his own way and just recently missed out on a couple massive business deals. He is beyond frustrated. .

Through the advice of a senior colleague, Joe schedules an appointment with a man named Pindar who happens to be an enigmatic speaker, author and mentor. I picture him as an older Tony Robbins type figure. Throughout the week Pindar introduces Joe to a group of "go-givers," each in charge of teaching him one of the *Five Laws of Stratospheric Success*.

Without going into full detail about each of the 5 philosophies, the basic message of the book can be summed up with the Third Law: Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people's interests first.

I truly enjoy reading these short business parables. Off the top of my head, a couple others that I've read and enjoyed are *Referral of a Lifetime* and *Who Moved my Cheese*. I'd recommend any of the three to someone who might be struggling with change or stuck in a rut of some kind. They are both inspiring and enlightening.

Is Facebook Your Friend?

Could your Facebook profile prevent you from getting a job offer? The online job site CareerBuilder reports that its survey of over 3,200 hiring managers found that 22 percent say they screen job applicants by viewing their social networking profiles, and 34 percent have eliminated job candidates because of the content they've found.

Top objections? Forty-one percent cited posts on drinking or drug use, and 40 percent were troubled by candidates' provocative photographs. Also: poor communication skills; evidence of dishonesty concerning applicants' qualifications; discriminatory remarks on race, religion, or gender; and unprofessional screen names.

Halloween Riddles

- Q: *How do you mend a broken jack-o-lantern?*
A: With a pumpkin patch.
- Q: *Why don't mummies take vacations?*
A: They're afraid they'll relax and unwind.
- Q: *Why didn't the skeleton dance at the party?*
A: He had no body to dance with.

Please Recycle This Newsletter?

One of the best and most beneficial compliments you can give me with regards to this newsletter is to pass it along. When you are done reading the newsletter this month, do me a favor. Instead of throwing it away or putting it in a pile on your desk, pass it along to a friend or co-worker so that they can enjoy reading it too.

Better yet - shoot me an email and I'll put them on my mailing list so that they can receive their own copy.

Thanks for NOT keeping me a Secret!



Lets Connect!

If you and I have not already connected on any of the numerous social networking sites, I'd encourage you to join me. You can currently find me at Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. Send me an invite and lets connect!



Friend me Up @ Facebook

Search for: Ryan France



Follow me @ Twitter

www.twitter.com/ryanfrance



Join my LinkedIn Network

www.linkedin.com/in/ryanfrance

Tips, Tricks, News & Notes

October 2009

Ryan France
StoneHaven Realty
13276 Research Blvd Suite 108
Austin, TX 78750

This newsletter is intended for entertainment purposes only. Credit is given to the authors of various articles that are reprinted when the original author is known. Any omission of credit to an author is purely unintentional and should not be construed as plagiarism or literary theft. Copyright 2009 Ryan France. This information is solely advisory, and should not be substituted for medical, legal, financial or tax advice. Any and all decisions and actions must be done through the advice and counsel of a qualified physician, attorney, financial advisor and/or CPA. We cannot be held responsible for actions you may take without proper medical, financial, legal or tax advice.